

CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A method, including steps of determining at least one connection parameter related to or affecting time involved in searching information relating to prices by sellers[[:]], said parameter comprising one or more of a time-to-live indication, a multiple connection indication, pre-fetched price information, pre-opened connections, pre-searched products, and a dead link indication;

searching, responsive said at least one connection parameter so as to reduce search time, for multi-variable information relating to prices by sellers of a selected product, where that multi-variable information includes at least two of the following: a stated price, a coupon or discount applicable to the selected product, a currency exchange rate, a measure of quality for an available item of that selected product, a measure of reputation for a selected seller or manufacturer of that selected product, a shipping cost or type, a tax imposed on purchase of the selected product;

computing an effective price in response to that multi-variable information; and

presenting that effective price in association with that selected product.

2. (Currently Amended) A method, including steps of determining at least one connection parameter related to or affecting time involved in searching information relating to prices by sellers;

searching, responsive to said at least one connection parameter so as to reduce search time, for stated prices provided by sellers of a selected product[[:]], said parameter comprising one or more of a time-to-live indication, a multiple connection

indication, pre-fetched price information, pre-opened connections, pre-searched products, and a dead link indication;

searching, responsive to said at least one connection parameter, for discounts available from those sellers, which discounts are applicable to purchases of that selected product;

applying those discounts to those stated prices, whereby an effective price can be computed; and

presenting that effective price in association with that selected product.

3. (Original) A method as in claim 1 or 2, including steps of aggregating the information regarding sellers offering the selected product; and

presenting to a potential buyer that aggregated information.

4. (Original) A method as in claim 1 or 2, including steps of filtering information regarding sellers of offering the selected product in response to at least one restriction selected by a potential buyer.

5. (Original) A method as in claim 1 or 2, including steps of obtaining at least some of that multi-variable information from a source other than a potential seller of that selected product.

6. (Original) A method as in claim 1 or 2, including steps of sorting information regarding sellers of offering the selected product in response to that effective price.

7. (Original) A method as in claim 1 or 2, wherein a search restriction is selected by a potential buyer, that search restriction including at least one of: a maximum effective price a minimum measure of quality, a minimum measure of reputation, a minimum shipping type, a maximum amount of product ordered.

8. (Original) A method as in claim 1 or 2, wherein at least some of that multi-variable information is entered from an offline source.

9. (Original) A method as in claim 1 or 2, wherein the steps of searching for multi-variable information include steps of searching for a first element of that multi-variable information; and searching, independently of those steps of searching for a first element, for a second element of that multi-variable information.

10. (Original) A method as in claim 1 or 2, wherein those discounts include at least one of: a fixed reduction in price, a percentage reduction in price, a reduction in price contingent on an amount of product ordered.

11. (Original) A method as in claim 1 or 2, wherein those discounts include at least one of: a reduction in shipping cost, an upgrade in shipping type without associated increase in price, and wherein those discounts are either unconditional or conditional on an amount of product ordered.

12. (Original) A method as in claim 1 or 2, wherein

those steps of searching also include information relating to packages of products including the selected product; and

the computed effective price is responsive to a minimum effective price for those packages of products.

13. (Original) A method as in claim 1 or 2, wherein those steps of searching also include information relating to products not exactly equal to the selected product.

14. (Cancel)

15. (Currently Amended) A method as in claim 1 or 2, wherein the searching frequency is in response to the time to live indication.

16. (Previously Presented) A method as in claim 1 or 2, wherein the connection parameter comprises a connection reliability indication.

17. (Previously Presented) A method as in claim 1 or 2, wherein the connection parameter comprises a number of transactions indication.

18. (Previously Presented) A method as in claim 1 or 2, wherein the connection parameter comprises a frequency of transactions with the seller.

19. (Previously Presented) A method as in claim 1 or 2, further including:

caching the multi-variable information and the connection parameter before receiving a request from a user to present the effective price.

20. (Previously Presented) A method as in claim 13, wherein the information relating to products not exactly equal to the selected product is responsive to a degree-of-match parameter.